

## Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

USDEL JEC PARIS

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY MANILA

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TAGS: PFOR, XC, US

SUBJECT: APRIL 6 INDOCHINA PRESS SUMMARY

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1. ALL PAPERS FEATURE THIEU'S PRESS CLUB ASSERTIONS  
RVN WILL " NEVER, NEVER" REQUEST RETURN OF US TROOPS,

AND WOULD BE ABLE SURVIVE FUTURE POSSIBLE NVN INVASION WITHOUT US AIR SUPPORT. NYT'S GWERTZMAN SAYS THIEU HANDLED TOUGH QUESTIONS " WITH APLOMB," AND " WENT OUT OF HIS WAY TO SAY WHAT MOST AMERICANS WERE PROBABLY EAGER TO HEAR." HIS CHARM, ACCORDING GWERTZMAN, WORKED AS EFFECTIVELY ON CAPITOL HILL AS WITH PRESS AUDIENCE. SPEAKER ALBERT DESCRIBED THIEU AS " VERY ABLE MAN, SOFT-SPOKEN BUT OBVIOUSLY WITH A LOT OF STEEL IN HIM." FULBRIGHT: " I WENT UP TO HIM AND SHOOK HIS HAND AND GAVE HIM A WEAK GRIN AND THEN LEFT." MANSFIELD FEELS THIEU " MADE A GOOD IMPRESSION," BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN IT WILL BE EASY TO GET VN AID BILL THROUGH CONGRESS. POST'S MARDELL SAYS THIEU IMPRESSED CLUB AUDIENCE AND CONGRESSMEN WITH HIS " POLITICAL ADROITNESS." SCOTT SAYS HE MADE GOOD IMPRESSION ON SENATORS. AGNEW DESCRIBES HIM AS " TREMENDOUS LEADER." SUN'S KEAT SAYS THIEU'S " UNQUALIFIED" ASSERTION AT PRESS CLUB THAT US AIR SUPPORT NO LONGER NEEDED CONTRASTS SHARPLY WITH EARLIER PRIVATE EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN BY SOME GVN OFFICIALS THAT US AIR MIGHT BE NEEDED IN EVENT OF FUTURE NVN INVASION ATTEMPT.

2. ALL PAPERS ALSO FEATURE PASSAGE BY 88-3 VOTE OF SEN. HARRY BYRD'S AMENDMENT PROHIBITING ANY US AID TO NVN WITHOUT PRIOR CONSENT OF CONGRESS. NYT'S NAUGHTON REPORTS NUMBER OF SENATORS CONSIDER AMENDMENT AS " MESSAGE" TO ADMINISTRATION THAT NVN AID WILL NOT PASS SENATE IN ANY EVENT. TOWER SAYS HE OPPOSES AMENDMENT BECAUSE HE AGAINST MAKING FOREIGN POLICY BY CONGRESSIONAL AMENDMENTS, BUT HE CURRENTLY DISPOSED TO OPPOSE AID TO HANOI. MCGOVERN TRIES ALTER AMENDMENT TO FORBID CONTINUED BOMBING IN CAMBODIA, BUT RULED OUT OF ORDER. POST'S RICH REPORTS MANSFIELD WILL OPPOSE ANY RECONSTRUCTION AID TO EITHER VN LONG AS US PAYING OUT BIG SUMS TO BOMB CAMBODIA. BYRD SAYS HE OPPOSES ANY " GIGANTIC AND COSTLY NEW PROGRAM AS REBUILDING INDOCHINA" WHILE DEFICIT FINANCING, INFLATION AND DEVALUATION OF DOLLAR TAKING PLACE.

3. NYT'S BUTTERFIELD IN VUNG TAU ON APRIL FOOL'S DAY,  
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FINDS HIGHWAY JAMMED AND BEACH THRONGED WITH ESTIMATED 50,000 VIETNAMESE WHO HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE GO THERE FOR YEARS. ONE PUZZLED VIETNAMESE ASKS: " WHY ARE YOU HERE? I THOUGHT ALL THE AMERICANS HAD GONE HOME."

4. UPON LEAVING PARIS, XUAN THUY TELLS NYT'S FLORA LEWIS US HAS REMOVED ONLY THREE MINES AND HAS RUN PHOTO RECON FLIGHTS OVER NVN. DOD OFFICIALS SAY THEY HAVE NO KNOWLEDGE OF ANY SUCH FLIGHTS.

5. HARVARD BIOCHEMISTS MESELSON AND BAUGHMAN SAY THEY DEVELOPED SENSITIVE NEW PROCESS WHICH FOUND COMPONENTS OF DANGEROUSLY TOXIC DIOXIN IN RIVER FISH TAKEN FROM SVN AREAS SUBJECTED TO DEFOLIATION BY " AGENT ORANGE." MESELSON SAYS DIOXIN KNOWN TO CAUSE BIRTH DEFECTS IN ANIMALS BUT ISN' T KNOWN WHAT EFFECT IT MIGHT HAVE ON HUMANS. " NO MASSIVE PROBLEM HAS BEEN SEEN THERE IN PUBLIC HEALTH, BUT IT EITHER MIGHT HAVE OCCURRED ON A VERY SMALL SCALE OR IS YET TO BUILD UP," HE SAYS ( NYT, WP).

6. SEN. BROOKE, IN VIENTIANE, SAYS POW TORTURE STORIES COULD JEOPARDIZE US AID TO NVN. SAYS: " I HAVE NO INDEPENDENT KNOWLEDGE THAT THE AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR WERE TORTURED, BUT I CAN CERTAINLY UNDERSTAND PUBLIC FEELINGS AOUT THIS" ( NYT).

7. GVN REPORTS LARGE NEW COMMUNIST ATTACKS, BUT GVN SOURCE TELLS NYT'S TREASTER: " THIS IS NOT THE BEGINNING OF AN OFFENSIVE. THEY ARE PROBING. THEY WANT TO KNOW EXACTLY WHAT OUR ALLIES WILL PROVIDE." ANOTHER SOURCE SAYS: " WE DO NOT ASK OURSELVES IF THE COMMUNISTS WILL HAVE AN OFFENSIVE. THE QUESTION IS WHEN." AP REPORTS ( WP) CANADIAN AND INDONESIAN EFFORTS TO INVOLVE ICCS IN SITUATION BOG DOWN IN PROCEDURAL WRANGLES WITH POLES AND HUNGARIANS. DOD'S GEN. JAMES SAYS COMMUNIST VIOLATIONS NOT " FORERUNNER TO AN OFFENSIVE."

8. AFP PEKING REPORTS SIHANOUK HAS RECENTLY VISITED AREAS OF CAMBODIA UNDER CONTROL OF ANTIGOVERNMENT UNCLASSIFIED

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FORCES, ACCORDING DIPLOMATIC SOURCES ( WP). REUTER PP REPORTS BIG CONVOY MOVING UP MEKONG WITH FUEL, FOOD AND MILITARY SUPPLIES BADLY NEEDED BY GKR. GKR REPORTEDLY HAS ARRESTED OR HELD UITHOUT CHARGE 500 PEOPLE SINCE PALACE BOMBING. SIHANOUK PARIS SPOKESMAN SAYS COMMUNIST- LED KHMER FORCES IN FINAL OFFENSIVE TO OVERTHROW LON NOL AND THERE NO POSSIBILITY OF NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT: " PHNOM PENH REGIME, WHICH IS ONLY BEING KEPT ALIVE BY THE AMERICANS, IS CRUMBLING. THE ENEMY IS IN SPASMS OF AGONY."

9. KOSYGIN TELLS STOCKHOLM NEWS CONFERENCE SOVIETS WILL DO ALL " THAT DEPENDS ON US TO IMPLEMENT" PARIS AGREEMENT ON VN. ASKED IF HE TRUSTS NIXON TO DO SAME, SAYS STATEMENTS REPEATEDLY MADE BY PRESIDENT " ALSO INDICATE THAT THE U. S. IS STRIVING

TO OBSERVE" AGREEMENT ( WP).

10. GLOBE ( APRIL 5), REFERRING TO CAMBODIA BOMBING, NOTES THAT DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY SULLIVAN SAID FOR OPENERS THAT JUSTIFICATION WAS PRESIDENT'S RE-ELECTION, AND THEN ADDED THAT TWO LAWYERS WERE SEARCHING FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY. WHATEVER LAWYERS MAY FIND, THERE CAN BE NO JUSTIFICATION, LEGAL OR MORAL, FOR OUR CONTINUING IN WAR IN ANY COUNTRY WITHOUT CONGRESSIONAL AUTHORIZATION. AGREES WITH WP COMMENT THAT CONSTITUTION " DOES NOT AUTHORIZE THE PRESIDENT TO BOMB FOREIGN COUNTRIES AT HIS OWN DISCRETION. IT DOES NOT SAY THAT, TO HELP ENFORCE SHAKY CEASEFIRE AGREEMENTS, THE PRESIDENT IS ENTITLED TO MAKE WARS AS HE SEES FIT."

11. GLOBE' S CROCKER SNOW ( APRIL 5), IN SAIGON, WRITES ON ILLEGAL MEANS USED BY SOUTH VIETNAMESE TO LEAVE COUNTRY, SINCE LAW VIRTUALLY BANNED ALL TOURIST TRAVEL FOR VIETNAMESE. ACTIVITY OF UNDERGROUND RAILWAY IS MEASURE OF SAIGON ELITE' S CONFIDENCE IN THIEU' S ABILITY TO MAINTAIN CONTROL AFTER US PULLOUT. IT

HAD ITS BUSY MOMENTS IN RECENT MONTHS DURING COUNTRY' S UP AND DOWN MILITARY AND POLITICAL PERIODS, BUT UNDERGROUND RAILROAD IS NOW OPERATING ON RELATIVELY SLOW  
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SCHEDULE. BRIBING SAIGON OFFICIALS TO APPROVE NECESSARY PAPERWORK OF PAYING OFF CHINESE GROUP FOR UNDERCOVER BORDER CROSSING INTO CAMBODIA AND POINTS WEST, ARE TWO ILLEGAL WAYS TO BUY OUT. PRICE OF TICKET ON UNDERGROUND RAILROAD IS NEGOTIABLE, BUT NOW AT ALL- TIME HIGH.

12. RAY CROMLEY ( S- N, APRIL 5), SAYING TORTURES INFILCTED ON US POWS BY NVN AND VC SHOULD OCCASION NO SURPRISE, GIVES LURID EXAMPLES OF ATROCITIES COMMITTED IN SVN. GROTESQUE NATURE OF THESE ATROCITIES, CONCLUDES CROMLEY, SHOWS THEY WERE COMMITTED AS PART OF POLICY DIRECTED TO POLITICAL AIMS - SELECTIVE KILLINGS AND TORTURES AIMED AT ACHIEVING CERTAIN GOALS.

13. STAR- NEWS ( APRIL 5) INTERPRETS PRESIDENT'S SAN CLEMENTE PLEDGE TO PROVIDE ECONOMIC AID TO SVN AS INDICATING THAT AID WILL BE LARGELY BILATERAL, ALTHOUGH BOTH PRESIDENTS SPOKE HOPEFULLY OF POSSIBLE PARTICIPATION OF " OTHER NATIONS AS WELL AS INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS." THINKS IT SIGNIFICANT THAT LITTLE SAID OF AREA- WIDE PROGRAM THAT WOULD INCLUDE NVN. APPARENTLY NOW WISELY AGREED TO SEPARATE SVN AND NVN AID, GIVEN

EXISTING CONGRESSIONAL RESISTANCE TO NVN AID. FOR ONE THING, STILL REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER NVN COMPLIANCE WITH PARIS ACCORDS WILL EVENTUALLY QUALIFY HANOI AS BENEFICIARY OF AN " INVESTMENT IN PEACE." FOR ANOTHER, THERE WILL BE ENOUGH DIFFICULTY GETTING ANY MAJOR FOREIGN AID PROGRAM THROUGH CONGRESS WITHOUT CREATING UNNECESSARY COMPLICATIONS.

14. CSM SUGGESTS MAIN REASON KISSINGER WAS NEVER ABLE TO HAVE CAMBODIA INCLUDED IN C- F ARRANGEMENTS HE MADE WITH HANOI WAS " MUSHINESS" OF CAMBODIAN WAR SITUATION -- OTHER SIDE SEES NO REASON TO THROW AWAY AT CONFERENCE TABLE WHAT PROSPECTS THEY ENJOY OF GETTING IN CAMBODIA DECISIVE SUCCESS STILL ELUDING THEM IN SVN AND LAOS. IN CAMBODIA, U. S. HOPES FOR POLITICAL SOLUTION IT COULD LIVE WITH. " WE HOPE IT FINDS ONE. THERE IS NO MILITARY SOLUTION IN SIGHT."

15. CHITRIB ( APR. 5) FEELS FSO PHILIP MANHARD, AS  
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FORMER POW, HAS OFFERED ARGUMENT " WHICH MAY BE MORE NEARLY VALID THAN MOST" IN DECIDING WHETHER U. S. SHOULD EXTEND AID TO NVN: " I THINK THE BEST INTEREST OF OUR COUNTRY AND PEOPLE LIES IN TRYING TO GENERATE A

STABLE PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE." TRIB SUGGESTS CASE FOR AIDING NVN HAS MERIT, ESPECIALLY IF OTHER COUNTRIES JOIN U. S. IN ENDEAVOR. IN ANY EVENT, " QUESTION MUST BE WEIGHED COOLLY AND RATIONALLY" ON BASIS OF MANHARD'S REASONING.

16. WILLIAM S. WHITE CONTENDS CHANCES OF WINNING ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FUNDS FOR NVN " ARE FAR FROM REMOTE," BUT INDEX OF HOW WIND " IS BLOWING, OR RATHER NOT BLOWING," IS SEEN IN WAY SAME " SENATE POLITICIANS WHO ONLY YESTERDAY WERE IN THE VAN OF THE FORGIVE- AND- FORGETTERS" TOWARD NVN " NOW VIE WITH THE OLD HARD- LINERS AS TO WHO CAN TURN A STONIER FACE TO HANOI." HOLDS THAT NVN WILL GET NO HELP FROM CONGRESS UNTIL THEY GIVE EVIDENCE THEY ARE THROUGH WITH INDOCHINA AGGRESSION; " BUT THEY WILL NEVER GIVE UP THAT AGGRESSION UNLESS THEY ARE MIGHTILY ENCOURAGED TO DO SO BY THE SORT OF AMERICAN AIR INTERVENTIONS WHICH THE DOVES ARE DETERMINED TO HALT"( PHINQ).

17. THIMMESCH ( CHITRIB, APR. 5) MAINTAINS " WE CAN TELL THE RETURNED ( POWS) ARE SPEAKING THE TRUTH," ABOUT HAVING BEEN " CRUELLY ABUSED, BEATEN, STARVED, AND TORTURED PSYCHOLOGICALLY", MERELY BY LOOKING AT THEIR FACES" ON TV. INSISTS THAT FONDA, COFFIN, WEISS, CLARK, BAEZ, HART, CHOMSKY AND OTHERS WHO " WENT TO

HANOI AND SERVED THE ENEMY WHILE HURTING THE U. S. AND OUR POWS" OWE " PUBLIC APOLOGY" TO RETURNED POWS " AND AN ADMISSION THAT THEY WERE INDEED DUPED BY HANOI."

18. GARY WILLS ( SUN) PAYS RESPECTS TO POWS WHO TOOK ANTI- WAR STANCE WHILE IMPRISONED -- " WHO USED THEIR PRISON TIME WELL, REFLECTING ON THE REALITIES THAT HISTORY WILL BEAR OUT." CONTENDS IF ADMINISTRATION HAD " COURAGE OF ITS PROPAGANDA, IT WOULD PROSECUTE THOSE WHO TURNED ' TRAITOR' IN THE VIETNAM CELLS"; BUT HOW CAN IT " PROSECUTE ' TRAITORS' FOR SAYING IN HANOI WHAT PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES AND OTHER HIGH POLITICIANS UNCLASSIFIED

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WERE SAYING TO APPROVING CROWDS HERE AT HOME?"

19. POST REPRINTS NEWSWEEK COLUMN IN WHICH STEW ALSOP CONTENDS NIXON HAS ALWAYS HAD " AN ALMOST UNGOVERNABLE IMPULSE TO UNDULGE IN SUPEREROGATION"-- COMPULSION " TO GO TOO FAR, TO TRY TOO HARD." SEES THIS NOT ONLY IN WATERGATE CASE, BUT PRESIDENT ALSO " HAS ENDLESSLY REITERATED" THAT VN SETTLEMENT -- " MAJOR ACHIEVEMENT FOR WHICH HE DESERVES MUCH CREDIT" -- IS "" PEACE WITH HONOR." IT IS NOT PEACE, AND HE WILL BE LEFT VULNERABLE WHEN IT BECOMES CLEAR THAT IT IS NOT PEACE."

20. SULZBERGER, IN SAIGON, CONCLUDES THERE IS " NO COMPELLING ARGUMENT" AGAINST VN PARTITION, AND U. S. INTENTIONS UPON ENTERING WAR " WERE HONORABLE EVEN IF THE DRIFT INTO WIDENING CONFLICT WAS UNFORESEEN." MAINTAINS WAR " WAS SURELY NOT WON"; U. S. " NEVER FOUGHT TO WIN," AND DID NOT MAKE ADEQUATE EFFORTS TO ENGAGE COUNTRY IN SENSE OF PARTICIPATION. INSTEAD, BURDEN " FELL UNFAIRLY ON THE YOUNG WHO DIDN'T UNDERSTAND ITS BACKGROUND AND WHOSE VIEWS SPREAD WIDELY." THIEU " HAS DONE FOOLISH, VINDICTIVE THINGS. BUT IT IS SILLY TO EQUATE HIS SEMIDICTATORSHIP WITH HANOI'S TOTALITARIAN SYSTEM." GVN SEEMS UNLIKELY TO SUCCUMB WHILE U. S. CONTINUES SUPPLYING LOGISTICS AND MAINTENANCE FOR ITS DEFENSE FORCES ( NYT). ROGERS

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